



STATE SENATOR

RICH ZIPPERER

**TESTIMONY OF SENATOR RICH ZIPPERER BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY
COMMITTEE ON JOBS, ECONOMY, AND SMALL BUSINESS IN SUPPORT
OF ASSEMBLY BILL 671**

Thank you for holding this hearing today. I appreciate the opportunity to provide some comments on this important legislation.

Assembly Bill 671 is a companion to Senate Bill 114, and is an important step forward for transparency and accountability in our state's budget process. This legislation is intended to shine light on earmarks and other practices in the state budget process.

Specifically, this legislation requires the Legislative Fiscal Bureau to prepare an earmark transparency report on each biennial budget bill that includes:

- A list of all earmarks
- The cost of each earmark
- The beneficiary of each earmark
- The assembly and senate district where the earmark is located
- The Representative or Senator that proposed the earmark

This legislation reforms the budget process in our state by requiring the fiscal bureau to alert lawmakers and the public to earmarks hidden in the omnibus budget bill before final votes are cast.

Finally, this legislation prohibits airdrops in a conference committee. Airdrops are brand new earmarks that were not included in the budget passed by either house or recommended by the Governor.

This legislation was approved by the Senate earlier this week by a vote of 30-3. Similar legislation has been voice voted in the Assembly in prior sessions. I hope you will join me in supporting this legislation to increase transparency in the budget process, and to ensure accountability in the use of tax dollars. Thank you for your time.